

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 037636

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: MORNING SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT REPORTS

1. LATIN AMERICA

A. COLOMBIANS VIEW US WITH AMBIVALENCE

IN ANALYZING COLOMBIAN PERCEPTIONS OF THE US, EMBASSY BOGOTA FINDS THE ATTITUDES OF TOP-LEVEL GOC LEADERS FULL OF AMBIVALENCES AND PARADOXES. CHARACTERIZING THESE PERCEPTIONS AS "FRIENDLY, SYMPATHETIC AND SORROWFUL," THE EMBASSY NOTES THAT:

--GOC LEADERS BELIEVE THE AUTHORITY OF THE US PRESIDENCY WAS SERIOUSLY WEAKENED BY WATERGATE, AND THAT THE BALANCE HAS SWUNG TOO FAR TOWARD THE CONGRESS, WITH A CONSEQUENT PREJUDICIAL EFFECT ON FOREIGN POLICY.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 037636

--WHILE DEPLORING THE OBSESSIVE PUBLIC WASHING OF DIRTY

LINEN, THE COLOMBIANS ARE UNEASY OVER THE DETAILS OF INTERVENTIONISM REVEALED BY INVESTIGATIONS OF THE CIA.

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EMBASSY COMMENT: THE GOC LEADERS' IMAGE OF THE US IS THAT OF A POWERFUL NATION THRASHING AROUND. THEY DO NOT SO MUCH DOUBT OUR POWER AS OUR PURPOSEFULNESS; NOT SO MUCH OUR WILL AS OUR MORALE; NOT SO MUCH OUR EFFICIENCY AND VITALITY, AS OUR VISION.

B. CHILE: THE JUNTA'S ECONOMIC WOES

EMBASSY SANTIAGO CONCLUDES THAT THE CHILEAN GOVERNMENT IS LIKELY TO SURVIVE EVEN THE WORST-CASE ECONOMIC PROSPECTS IN 1976 WITHOUT RADICAL MODIFICATIONS IN GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE AND POLICY. HOWEVER, THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMIC OUTLOOK IS GLOOMY:

--GNP, INDIVIDUAL INCOME, PRODUCTION AND EMPLOYMENT HAVE ALL DECLINED, AND AUSTERITY MEASURES HAVE DIMINISHED THE RATE OF INFLATION WITHOUT REDUCING INFLATIONARY PSYCHOLOGY.

--WHILE COPPER PRICES HAVE PLUNGED TO HISTORIC LOWS, PETROLEUM AND OTHER IMPORT COSTS ARE SKYROCKETING.

--IMF ASSISTANCE AND PRIVATE BANK LINES OF CREDIT WILL NOT BE FORTHCOMING WITHOUT SOME EFFORT AT RESCHEDULING THE COUNTRY'S \$730 MILLION EXTERNAL DEBT (DUE THIS YEAR).

EMBASSY COMMENT: BECAUSE OF OUR DIRECT AID, INFLUENCE IN INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS, AND WORLD LEADERSHIP, WE CAN EXERCISE GREATER PRESSURE WHICH SHOULD BE CAREFULLY MODULATED TO ENCOURAGE REAL IMPROVEMENTS IN HUMAN RIGHTS AND A RETURN TO NORMAL DEMOCRATIC PRACTICES. (SECRET) BOGOTA 1591, 2/13 AND (SECRET) SANTIAGO 1157, 2/12.)

2. NIGERIAN COUP LEADER REMAINS AT LARGE

SECRET

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PAGE 03 STATE 037636

RADIO NIGERIA HAS ANNOUNCED THAT LT. COL. DIMKA, LEADER OF THE FEBRUARY 13 COUP ATTEMPT, IS STILL AT LARGE. EMBASSY LAGOS BELIEVES THAT OTHER MAJOR COUP FIGURES MAY ALSO HAVE ESCAPED APPREHENSION, THEREBY EXPLAINING THE CONTINUATION OF THE CURFEW AND BORDER AND AIRPORT CLOSINGS. (UNCLASSIFIED) LAGOS 1893 AND (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE) 1894, 2/15.) KISSINGER

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